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Tufts wimps out with its CIA ban

A RECENT decision by Tufts to ban recruitment by the Central Intelligence Agency on its campus is deplorable. Two weeks ago, student demonstrators formed a human chain, preventing recruiters from meeting with undergraduates. At a recent disciplinary hearing, the administration decided not to punish the young thugs, thus encouraging the rule by force.

Even more outrageous was their decision to bow to the demands of the protesters and put a temporary ban on CIA recruitment.

Should Tufts extend their ban, as proposed, they will be making an important political statement: that America really doesn't need an intelligence service. It's one thing to criticize the CIA's past or present operations, and quite another to declare

them persona non grata. With the Soviet Union and its allies making significant inroads in Central America, Southeast Asia and the Middle East, this is a dangerously naive position. A well-run intelligence network is also our first line of defense against the kind of international terrorism that has plagued U.S. missions around the world.

The U.S.S.R. has the most extensive, well-funded, intelligence-gathering network in the world. Its agents have achieved notable successes stealing our technology and subverting pro-Western governments.

By acquiescing to attacks on the CIA, Tufts is playing into the hands of those who would prefer to see our nation vulnerable to both covert aggression and terrorist blackmail.